



Robley Rex VA Medical Center, Louisville, KY

The Volunteer Promise

Volume 66

May 2011

Mark Your Calendars!

Sunday, May 8
Mother's Day

Monday, May 9
Re-Creation Performance

Wednesday, May 25
Run for the Wall

Monday, May 30
Memorial Day
Federal Offices Closed

Sunday, June 5
Welcome Home

Tuesday, June 14
Flag Day

Sunday, June 19
Father's Day

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The 65th Annual Robley Rex VA Medical Center Volunteer Awards Ceremony was held Saturday, April 9, 2011, at the Olmsted in Louisville. More than 300 volunteers, guests and staff were in attendance as we rolled out the "Red Carpet" for our "Star Volunteers".



Special Awards were presented to Donald Oliver, Outstanding Male Volunteer of the Year, and Deanna Abney, Outstanding Female Volunteer of the Year. In addition, Dale Winningham was honored with a special contribution award in recognition of his willingness to tackle tasks beyond his Volunteer Escort assignment.

The Medical Center Director presented an award to the Blind Veterans Workgroup for their tireless efforts on behalf of Veteran patients. This group prepared more than 200,000 mailings for Veterans last year, including notifications of upcoming appointments and Means Testing.

Other highlights: Jesse Alton Andis received an award for 20,000 hours and Eloise Terry was recognized for 41 years and 9,738 hours of service. Thank you to all volunteers for another great year of service to Veterans!

Special thanks goes to the staff of Robley Rex VA Medical Center for once again providing door prizes for this event. Due to their generosity, each volunteer in attendance received at least one door prize.

Volunteers who were unable to attend the ceremony should check with Voluntary Service to receive a gift and any award they earned.

Run For the Wall

On Wednesday, May 25, 2011, Robley Rex VA Medical Center once again has the privilege of hosting Run for the Wall participants as they travel across the country on their way to the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC. Their mission is "To promote healing among ALL veterans and their families and friends, to call for an accounting of all Prisoners of War and those Missing in Action (POW/MIA), to honor the memory of those Killed in Action (KIA) from all wars, and to support our military personnel all over the world."



We expect more than 300 motorcycles will arrive at our facility at approximately 8:45 a.m. Please join us in welcoming them.

As always, we will offer packaged snacks and drinks for the riders when they arrive. To learn more about the visit or to offer donations of snacks, contact Voluntary Service at (502) 287-6221. To learn more about Run for the Wall, visit their website at www.rftw.org.

Welcome Home 2011



Robley Rex VA Medical Center will honor personnel of the Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) of Louisville at this year's Welcome Home event. The Support Center has approximately 300 military personnel in 9 separate units and more than 85% of those personnel have served in Iraq or Afghanistan.

The event is scheduled for Sunday, June 5, 2012, at the Louisville Zoo. Thanks to your generous donations, we will host more than 400 sailors and family members and provide them with Zoo admission and a catered lunch. Donated funds will be used to purchase small items for the children, including animal print backpacks, small stuffed animals and stickers.

Welcome Home is intended to show our appreciation to the sailors for all they do while affording them a special day with their families. On the day before the event, VA staff and other organizations will be present at NOSC to provide valuable information about benefits and resources available to Veterans.

This event will deplete General Post Fund (GPF 532). Please consider budgeting some of your resources to fund next year's event.

Open House for Women Veterans

The Robley Rex VA Medical Center Customer Service Board is planning a special event for Women Veterans. The event is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, August 13, 2011, at the Medical Center on Zorn Avenue. The Medical Center will provide valuable information on health and benefits to those in attendance. This will also be a networking opportunity for women Veterans. While final details are still being worked out, the following will be available at the Open House.

Health/Benefits Information

Women's Preventive Health
Nutrition
Mental Health
Spiritual Care
Veterans Benefits Information
Health Benefits Enrollment

Special Offerings

Massage
Hand Treatment
Fitness Demonstrations
Healthy Cooking
Refreshments
Door Prizes

Funding will be needed to purchase items such as tote bags and buttons for participants. Donations to support this event may be directed to GPF 500 and earmarked for "Women Veterans Open House."

Summer Student Volunteer Program

This summer, Robley Rex VA Medical Center will once again welcome student volunteers ages 14-18. You will recognize them by their blue polo-style uniform shirt and their official volunteer name badge. These students are integral members of our quality VA healthcare team so please welcome them as they work with us to enhance our service to Veterans.

Students participating in the summer volunteer program earn valuable experience and are eligible to compete in a variety of local and national scholarship opportunities. This year's program will run from June 13 through August 5 and students must attend a one-day orientation June 13, 14, or 15.

For additional information about this program, contact Joan Norman, Student Volunteer Coordinator, Voluntary Service at (502) 287-6989.

Quilts of Valor



Quilts of Valor is a grassroots effort started by Catherine Roberts of Seaford, Delaware, as a means to honor her son's year long deployment in Iraq. Her mission is to provide all service members and Veterans touched by war with these Quilts of Valor. Quilts are presented to service members in either a pillow case or tote bag, together with a journal telling the recipient about the quilter and a note that states "Thank you for your

service, sacrifice, and valor".

The Quilts of Valor mission was recently shared at a regional quilt show as was the Robley Rex VA Medical Center's interest in participating in this worthy project. Our medical center is proud to assist with Mrs. Roberts' mission by helping to identify future recipients who are currently served by the medical center.

Volunteers can support this effort in a number of ways. Quilters can use their skill by making quilts, non-quilters can donate funds for quilts to be made, and everyone can assist in identifying recipients for quilts. To learn more about Quilts of Valor, visit their website www.govf.org or contact Voluntary Service.

VAVS Partnerships

The VA Voluntary Service Program (VAVS) provides Veterans with those extra services beyond what is traditionally expected of a health care facility. It is ONLY through our partnerships with YOU — Volunteers, Veteran Service Organizations, Civic/Community Organizations, Corporate Sponsors and other partners — that we are able to provide these extra services. Besides our ongoing programs, projects and events, there are often cases involving individual Veterans who need assistance that the Medical Center cannot provide.

Our Voluntary Service Assistant, Rita Flowers, recently collaborated with VAVS partners to assist two such Veterans. One Veteran was in a homeless shelter with his wife and 13-month old child. The Veteran desperately needed tires for his vehicle in order to travel to his own medical appointments and to secure resources for his family. Ms. Flowers contacted the Masonic Service Association, who purchased a cell phone, groceries, gift cards, and other much needed items for the family. Further, they collaborated with the Disabled American Veterans Chapter 3 in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, to purchase tires for the Veteran's car.

Another Veteran in crisis was living in a trailer with his young children. The trailer had no running water due to a main water line break. Ms. Flowers contacted the Commander of American Legion Post 332 in Milltown, Indiana and asked for assistance for this Veteran. The post sent a plumber to the Veteran's home and the Veteran and his family now have running water.



Kudos to Ms. Flowers and to all of our VAVS Partners!



Organization Spotlight

Vietnam Veterans of America

Vietnam Veterans of American (VVA) Chapter 454 was recently recognized at a regional conference for contributing over 3,000 hours of volunteer service to VAVS in 2010. This total gave Chapter 454 a ranking of 12th out of the more than 630 chapters nationwide in their support of VAVS. With membership in excess of 140 members, VVA Chapter 454 is the largest in our state and the most active.

Founded in 1978, Vietnam Veterans of America is the only national Vietnam veterans organization congressionally chartered and exclusively dedicated to Vietnam-era veterans and their families. Their goals are "to promote and support the full range of issues important to Vietnam veterans, to create a new identity for this generation of veterans, and to change public perception of Vietnam veterans."

Since VVA Chapter 454 was founded in 1989, members have volunteered in excess of 30,000 hours of service to Robley Rex VA Medical Center and several members have been recognized with the Presidential Service Award for over 4,000 hours of service. In addition to individual volunteer assignments including Escort, Volunteer Transportation Program and Popcorn Sales, volunteers from the chapter also participate in ward adoptions and lead activities such as monthly movie and popcorn night on 7 North and "birthday" visits to the Vet Center. Chapter members also visit Veterans in a nearby nursing home on a regular basis. At all of these activities the chapter provides refreshments to compliment the demonstration of their caring and dedication to helping others. The chapter also provides volunteers for such annual special events as Stand Down for the Homeless, Run For the Wall, and numerous other events honoring Veterans. Additionally, two members of the chapter serve on the VAVS Executive Committee.

VVA Chapter 454 not only gives of their time, they also provide funding for variety of VAVS Programs. They provide support for ongoing programs as well as special needs that arise. For example, VVA Chapter 454 has provided shelving units for storage in VAVS, flags for use by the Medical Center and its Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC) and purchases clothing each year for the homeless Veterans Christmas project.

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 454 remains loyal to the founding principle of the VVA organization, *"Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another."*



To share what YOUR group is doing for Veterans at Robley Rex VA Medical Center, contact Voluntary Service at 502-287-6221 or email vhalouvavs@va.gov.

THANK YOU VA STAFF!

Due to the generosity of the Robley Rex VA Medical Center Staff, each volunteer present at the 2011 Volunteer Awards Program received at least one door prize. Each year, Medical Center staff members and departments take advantage of this opportunity to show their appreciation to the volunteers who serve our Veterans each and every day. They know that your time and talents enhance the quality of care and experience that each Veteran has when he/she visits our facility.

A special thanks goes out to the staff members and services who demonstrated their appreciation by donating door prizes ranging from gift cards to jewelry! Some of those staff members and services are listed below. Others requested to remain anonymous.



DAN BARRAGAN
LEILA BAXTER
DELENA BIDWELL
ANGELA BROKMANN
MARK BROWN
BETH BROWN
MICHAEL BUTLER
LAURA CARTER
SUSAN CLOSE
EVA AND DENNIS EGOLF
CHARLIE FARRELL
QUINNELL FINLEY
MILDRED FLEISCHMAN
CHERYL GREENE
LANE AND LAURA HILL
KASSIE HOLLMAN
KAREN MAGHOUL
BETH MCCLELLAN
DR. ANDY MEYER

JOAN NORMAN
VICKY PAYTON
LINDA RODGERS
NATASHA RUDOLPH
TERE SCHOEMEHL
DR. JAMES SHAUGHNESSY
RHONDA SMITH
MARYBETH STEWART
FRANK STEWART
PAMALA THOMPSON
SHEILA TIBBS
KIMBERLY WILLIAMS
CHRIS WILLIAMS
CHAP. GARY YARBERRY
RADIOLOGY SERVICE
NURSING SERVICE
MEDICAL SERVICE
GERIATRICS AND EXTENDED CARE
NURSING SERVICE



ATTENTION VETERANS!

The Robley Rex VA Medical Center (VAMC) is hosting two public meetings on Wednesday, May 11, 2011. The purpose of these meetings is to present site options currently being considered for the new Robley Rex VAMC. At this meeting, the public will have an opportunity to provide comments, via open testimony or in writing, regarding their viewpoint on the information provided. A summary of the comments will be provided to Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Eric K. Shinseki.

Meetings are open to the public and all are invited to attend.

WHAT: VA Public Meetings

Potential Locations of New Robley Rex VA Medical Center Facilities

WHEN: Wednesday, May 11, 2011

First Meeting 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Second Meeting 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

WHERE: Clifton Center

Eifler Theatre

2117 Payne Street

Louisville, KY

The Clifton Cultural Center is conveniently located with plenty of free parking. Driving directions are available at the Clifton Center web-site at www.cliftoncenter.org

For more information, visit the Robley Rex VAMC web-site at www.louisville.va.gov or contact Public Affairs Officer, Judy Williams, at (502) 287-5502.

Volunteer Help Needed

Volunteers provide a unique brand of support for the Louisville VA Medical Center, assisting staff with a variety of activities that support the care and treatment of Veterans. Volunteers may provide clerical support, direct or indirect patient care, mechanical support, transportation support or grounds maintenance support. **Contact Voluntary Service to discuss your personal interests.** Some of the more critical needs at this time include:

Clerical Support Activities: There are a variety of assignments in this category. Additionally, volunteers (age 18 years or older) with computer skills are needed in multiple administrative areas. Additional details are available in the Voluntary Service office.

Telephone Skills Needed – The Engineering Transportation office (garage) is in need of volunteers to answer telephones, take messages and contact shuttle drivers. Some other clerical duties may be included.

Transportation Services - Drivers and Transportation Coordinators are needed for the Volunteer Transportation Program, a special service staffed by volunteers who are dedicated to assuring that Veterans have the transportation they need to come to the medical center and to community-based outpatient clinics.

Shuttle Transportation Drivers – Drivers are needed to operate the VA Medical Center's Grounds Shuttle. The drivers in this program remain on the VA property and offer transportation assistance to Veterans moving to and from their automobiles and the medical center entrances.

Helping Hands: An assignment is available for a volunteer to sit with a Veteran who may be a risk to fall. They would try to keep the Veteran in bed or get the nurse if the Veteran had to get up. They may also read or write letters for the Veteran, set up meal trays, record food and fluid intake.

Evening/Weekend Assignments: A few assignments are available during evenings and weekends. There are assignments in SPD, Helping Hands, Telephones, or the Emergency Department.

Program Adoption Requests/Donation Needs

Medical Procedures Unit—Patients are admitted to this treatment area when they come to the medical center for any of a variety of medical procedures that do not require full hospitalization. Veterans typically are instructed not to eat or drink prior to their procedure and would benefit from your donation of snack crackers and fruit juice for that time when the dietary restriction is lifted after their procedure is completed.

Hospice Family Room— Located on ward 5 North, this room is reserved for the family members of hospice patients. The families often will not leave their veteran even long enough to take care of personal needs. Our goal is to make them as comfortable as possible during a very difficult time. Your assistance in providing refreshments for this area is appreciated.

Heroes to Hometowns—Our youngest population of veterans are in need of items to help them support their families. Items especially needed include gift cards for groceries/gasoline, diapers in all sizes—especially needed are diapers in size 4 or 5 and pull-ups in all sizes..

Community Residential Care Program—Veterans enrolled in this program are living in reduced circumstances in the community. They often find it difficult to purchase the little things most of us take for granted—an occasional snack, toiletries, and similar items.

Ward Adoptions—As the patients are generally unable to leave their bedsides to seek companionship and entertainment, the Adopt-A-Ward Program offers the opportunity to customize their participation in the Voluntary Service Program by concentrating their activities on a single ward or patient area. All donations provided by the organization or individual are used specifically to meet the special patient needs that are not funded through the medical center's budget for program operations. Especially needed for several inpatient wards are individually wrapped snack foods.

Contact Voluntary Service at (502) 287-6221 to discuss your ability to provide assistance.

MONETARY AND MATERIAL NEEDS FOR VETERAN PROGRAMS

Monetary Donations:

Patient Comfort Items: (GPF 515) Donations to this account will be used to support the Comfort Cart, a program in which volunteers provide personal hygiene items to hospitalized Veterans.

Television Fund: (GPF 505) Donations are needed to purchase televisions for ASU. Five televisions are needed at a cost of approximately \$970 each.

Social Work Service Emergency Fund: (GPF 502) Donations to this account support patient emergency needs in situations not covered by medical center resources. These include certain travel expenses and clothing needs for patients upon discharge from the medical center.

OEF/OIF Veterans Fund: (GPF 532) Funds Donated to GPF 532 (OIF/OEF Welcome Home) will be used to support our annual Welcome Home event, which honors returning combat Veterans.

Stand Down for the Homeless: (GPF 525) Funds are needed to support Stand Down 2011. Proceeds will be used to purchase clothing and personal items for homeless Veterans who need our support.

Material Donations: Program Adoptions (additional information can be found on page 5)

Community Residential Care: snacks, juice, toiletries and similar items.

Hospice Family Room: assorted snack foods, including microwave popcorn, and drinks.

Medical Procedures Unit: crackers and fruit juice.

OEF/OIF Veterans: gift cards for groceries/gasoline, diapers, and pull ups.

Ward Adoptions: Multiple wards have requested assorted snacks and drinks for distribution to the veterans. Wards in particular need for new or additional donors include 6 South and 7 North.

For a complete list of General Post Funds Accounts and their definitions, refer to the *General Post Funds and Material Donations* booklet published by Voluntary Service.

The Volunteer Promise

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You may also view our newsletter on line at <http://www.louisville.va.gov/>. Scroll down and click on "Volunteer or Give," then click on Volunteer Promise Newsletter.

We welcome your thoughts about this newsletter and your ideas for articles. Contact Voluntary Service to share your suggestions.

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